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SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY--PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

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SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY ENCOMPASSES ANY AREA OF GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY BROUGHT TO BEAR ON ANY PROBLEM OF SCHOOLS, OR PERSONS IN SCHOOLS, OR THE EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS OF SCHOOLS. AFTER WORLD WAR II, THE DEMAND FOR SCHOOL PROVISION OF CLINICAL SERVICES ROSE GREATLY BECAUSE OF THE RECOGNITION OF NEED, AFFLUENCE, AND THE POST-WAR BABY BOOM WHICH MAGNIFIED EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS. SUB-DOCTORAL PROGRAMS ARE DIRECTED TOWARD TURNING OUT PERSONS WHO CAN PROVIDE THE KIND OF CLINICALLY ORIENTED SERVICE THAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS NEED AND DEMAND. ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE THAYER CONFERENCE WAS THE GENERAL AGREEMENT THAT SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY SHOULD REFLECT NOT ONLY CLINICAL, BUT GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY. IN MICHIGAN, STATE FUNDING IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIMITED SCOPE OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY BECAUSE THE REIMBURSABLE PROGRAM PLACES RESTRAINTS AND CONSTRAINTS ON THOSE ELIGIBLE TO SERVE AND ON THE NATURE OF THE SERVICE. LITTLE DOCTORAL LEVEL SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY EXISTS IN MICHIGAN. IN THE FUTURE, SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY WILL APPLY GENERAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND METHODS TO SCHOOL PROBLEMS. THIS DOCUMENT APPEARED AS PART 1 IN PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FUNCTIONS OF SELECTED MIDWESTERN PUPIL PERSONNEL WORKERS, REPORT 1, IRCOPPS MIDWEST RESEARCH CENTER FOR PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICE, ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN, PP. 12-23 AND IS AVAILABLE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS BULLETIN OF EDUCATION, VOL. 20, NO. 1, FALL ISSUE, NOVEMBER, 1965. (FS)

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PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FUNCTIONS OF SELECTED MIDWESTERN PUPIL PERSONNEL WORKERS

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Report 1

IRCOPPS MIDWEST RESEARCH CENTER
FOR PUPIL PERSONNEL SERVICE

PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND FUNCTIONS OF SELECTED MIDWESTERN PUPIL PERSONNEL WORKERS

James Dunn
Robert Havens
Richard Knowles
Frank Maple
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THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
1967

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PREFACE

This report is the first in a series of research monographs produced by the IRCOPPS Midwest Research Center, which was established in the fall of 1963 with the assistance of NIMH Research Funds.

Activities of the Center were directed toward a number of basic problems ranging from an analysis of pupil personnel workers, their characteristics, and their training; and, finally, toward studies of differential diagnosis and methods of problem prevention. The present report[1] deals with the first of these. Subsequent reports in this series deal with other of our activities.

A comprehensive overview of all facets of Center operations, with synopses of the various technical reports in the monograph series, may be found in our 1967 Summary Status Report.

Information regarding other activities of the Interprofessional Research Commission on Pupil Personnel Services may be had by writing IRCOPPS, The University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland.

James A. Dunn
Director

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[1]Research supported under NIMH Grant #01428.

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PART I

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

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SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE[1]

One of the most dynamic and rapidly growing areas in education today is school psychology; but school psychology is not actually a new field. Indeed, Arnold Gesell reports that he was appointed as a school psychologist in Connecticut as early as 1915. Futhermore, clinical psychology is really a direct derivative of school psychology and if one wants to stretch a point, one could say that educational psychology is also an outgrowth of the practice of psychology in the schools.

School Psychology, Past

Clinical psychology is generally held to have begun in this country with the establishment of Witmer's clinic at the University of Pennsylvania in 1896. The first case seen in Witmer's clinic rested in large part on referrals from the public schools of Philadelphia. Similarly, the modern psychometric movement dates back to 1904 when Alfred Binet was retained by the

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[1]Digest of an address given at the University of Kansas under the sponsorship of the School of Education and supported in part by funds from Public Law 88164 and by the IRCOPPS Midwest Research Center for Pupil Personnel Services under Public Health Grant MH1428 from the National Institute of Mental Health.

French Minister of Public Instruction to develop a procedure for selecting slow learners for special education class rooms. In a similar manner, except that concern was for the learner as contrasted to the non-learner, educational psychology, that area of psychology aimed at a better understanding of human learning, derives largely from the work of Thorndike at Columbia.

All of these movements in psychology had as their original focus of application, the public schools. Each, however, eventually went its own way. With the advent of the mental health movement, that area of applied psychology which eventually became known as clinical psychology, disengaged itself from direct connection with the schools and moved into the child guidance clinics then being established; and then, after World War II, into the adult psychiatric wards. With the advent of World War I, the psychometric movement left the schools and became more involved in personnel selection and assignment problems. The movement then came back to the schools in the 1920s for the development of standardized achievement tests and then moved into the personality-clinical areas in the 1930s; and finally back into the personnel selection and evaluation area with the coming of the Second World War. It is interesting to note, as a parenthetical aside, that most of the standardized achievement tests used today by and large date back to the 1920 era and are only modifications, revisions, and/or

re-standardizations of the tests originally constructed during that period. Educational psychology remained within the confines of education, but shifted its orientation from the scientific-experimental study of human learning, insofar as the learning of meaningful material in naturalistic settings was concerned, to a service function in colleges of education where the goal was to more effectively help the teacher learn the "whys, wherefores, and how to's" of her chosen profession. There was, however, a residual interest on the part of a few persons and a few school systems in school psychology *per se*.

At this point I should define what I mean by school psychology. It has not been necessary, up to this point, to define the term, but in order to clarify subsequent discussions, it would be advantageous to do so. School Psychology is simply psychology which has the school as its primary focus of application. By school, I mean not only the public school, but any institution or organization, industry, the military, and the government, which conducts a systematic program of instruction. Psychology refers to any area of academic psychology. Thus school psychology encompasses any area of general psychology brought to bear on any problem of schools, or persons in schools, or the educational programs of schools.

In the past, and in the present too for that matter, school psychology has been primarily "clinical" in nature and thus might

be more appropriately called clinical school psychology. This picture is changing, however, although slowly. Suffice it to say, then, that "School Psychology Past" can be considered according to two periods; the earlier period in which psychology in general was interested in the problems of education, and in the latter period, in which education because of the problems it faced, became interested in, and turned to, clinical psychology for help. In both situations, however, school psychology in the past was an exceedingly small undertaking. The present picture is a very different one.

School Psychology, Present

It might be fairly said that in the post World War II era, clinical psychology really came of age. Not only did the general public recognize the need for a broad range of such services, but they also had the affluence with which to afford that service. This recognition of need plus the financial ability to do something about it, when coupled with the post-war baby boom, and its consequent magnification of educational problems, resulted in a meteoric rise in the demand for the school provision of clinical service to children.

It is hard to gage just how meteoric that rise has been. In 1948, Division 16, The American Psychological Association's Division of School Psychology, had a membership of 68 persons.

By 1955 the membership of Division 16 had climbed to 348 and by 1963 the membership was 856. This is an increase of 1000% in just 15 years; however, the growth of Division 16 does not adequately reflect the true growth of school psychology. Over 90% of the Division 16 membership is at the doctoral level, whereas, the real increase in the number of practicing school psychologists has been at the sub-doctoral level. Consequently, Division 16 membership is a highly conservative index. A more accurate figure would probably be several thousand percent.

An alternative index of the growth of school psychology might be the increase in the number of universities offering work in that area. At the time of the Thayer Conference in 1954, there were only five universities offering doctoral work specifically in the area of school psychology. By 1960 this figure had risen to 22 and by 1962, to 30. Similarly, Ferguson has reported that the number of master's level training programs has jumped from 18 in 1953 to 91 in 1959.

Thus there can be little doubt as to the extremely rapid growth of school psychology. In a country in which one-fourth to one-third of its 180 million population are in the public schools, and another sizable proportion of its population in educational programs in various other sectors of life, school psychology has the potential for becoming, and indeed is well on its way to being, the largest single sector of psychological enterprise in this country.

An analysis of the growth of degree programs in school psychology, both doctoral and sub-doctoral, is an interesting subject in its own right; and is something in which myself and others at the Midwest Research Center for Pupil Personnel Services have been interested. For the most part the Master's and "Master's plus" programs (i.e., programs requiring the Master's degree plus a specified number of additional hours, usually 15 or 30) are offered by schools of education or small departments of psychology and are clearly in the "clinical" mold. That is, they are directed toward turning out persons who can provide the kind of clinically oriented service that the public schools need and demand. As a consequence, such programs are in some measure counter to, and perhaps a reaction against, the larger clinical movement as represented by APA Division 12, which has emphasized the necessity of Ph.D. and even post-Ph.D. training before an individual is ready to function independently in a clinical capacity.

Doctoral programs reflect a slightly different picture, however. At the time of the APA Thayer Conference in 1954, the proceedings of which were published as School Psychologists at Mid-Century, in 1955 and which is now generally viewed as a sort of Magna Carta of school psychology, the five doctoral programs then in existence were largely clinically oriented also, but one of the most significant contributions of the Thayer Conference was the general agreement that school psychology should reflect

not simply clinical psychology alone, but rather general psychology. In addition, the Conference emphasized the importance of the amalgamation or blending together of psychological and and educational knowledge and skills in order that the person might function more effectively in his chosen area.

Another aspect of "School Psychology Present" is state certification. In 1950 only nine states had certification practices regarding school psychology. Kansas was one. Only seven required the master's degree or its equivalent. Thirteen years later, in 1963, 35 states had certification regulations; 15 recognized two or more levels of competency; and nine required either the Ph.D. or "all but the thesis" for top certification. Less than half of the states having certification practices required teaching experience or a teaching certificate. The states that still do not require certification are primarily those states in the deep south such as Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and a few of the sparsely populated western states such as Texas, Nevada, Montana and New Mexico.

School Psychology, Future

The really crucial question regarding school psychology, though, is "Where does school psychology go from here?" In Michigan, and probably elsewhere as well, the growth of school psychology was in large measure dictated by the fact that the

State provided financial reimbursement to school systems hiring a school psychologist, or school diagnostician, as they are called in the State of Michigan. The reimbursed rate has escalated periodically over the years. The current reimbursement rate is now $7,250 per diagnostician per school year.

The school diagnostician in Michigan is fundamentally a Master's level individual who is expected to serve only those children suspected of being mentally retarded. Thus, state funds are in large measure responsible for the limitation of the scope of school psychology in Michigan inasmuch as the reimbursable program places restraints and constraints on who is eligible to serve the program and on the nature of that service.

There is very little doctoral level school psychology in Michigan. As of last year there were only 14 Ph.D. School Psychologists in the state and many of those do not hold their degree in psychology per se. One of the primary reasons for the relative scarcity of doctoral level psychologists is, I feel, the fact that the full expense of such a program must be born by the local school system and not many systems are sufficiently aware of the scope of services general psychology has to offer education beyond the clinical diagnostic, and perhaps remedial, services with which they are already familiar. As a consequence, modern school psychology is only beginning to be practiced in Michigan.

There are, however, certain national trends that can be observed. More and more of the training programs, and the doctoral programs in particular, are directed toward training good general psychologists with sufficient sophistication in both the areas of education and psychology to allow the individual to work either directly or indirectly in school and/or educational settings. Rather than train students in a particular field of psychology, the tendency appears now to be to train students generally and allow students to select their own areas of academic and professional specialization. Such is the case at the University of Michigan, for example, where the school psychology program is administered jointly by the School of Education and the Department of Psychology and is aimed at providing a student with a strong general background in both areas. As a consequence, our graduates have a great deal of flexibility in their professional life and we feel they are having a considerable impact on the educational scene today. If graduates of the Joint Program in Education and Psychology have anything in common, it is their lack of adherence to a stereotyped model. One is a director of special services in a large metropolitan school system; one is a principal in a bi-racial experimental school; several are practicing school psychologists; another is an assistant dean of a college of education; another a Peace Corps coordinator; several are research psychologists in government, military, and educational agencies; and of course a fairly large number are university professors.

Parallel to this generally expanding concept of school psychology is a growing tendency for school systems to solicit help from other than the clinical areas of psychology. It is not uncommon now to hear of school systems seeking the services of experimental psychologists for problems in educational research; child or developmental psychologists for problems of curriculum development and in-service teacher training; management and personnel psychologists for problems of personnel selection and systems analysis; industrial psychologists for problems of plant management and efficiency studies; social psychologists for community problems relating to problems of multi-racial conflict, financial support of higher education, etc. Thus, I think, school psychology in the future will really reflect psychology in general, the single characteristic feature being that it is the application of general psychological principles and methods to school problems.

In closing, then, I might comment on what should be a very obvious question at this point. How does school psychology differ from educational psychology? The answer is, it really doesn't, at least not in the generic sense. In the strict sense, educational psychology is really the application of psychological knowledge and methods to problems of education, and that, after all, is the definition I have of school psychology. The trouble is that, in the past, educational psychology has consistently and systematically restricted itself and turned its attention

progressively more and more to the extremely important, and, I believe, even <u>crucial</u>, but nevertheless <u>service</u>, function of teacher training and preparation. And in so doing, educational psychology has fallen behind in the areas of basic research, innovation, and practical contribution, and as a result, other areas of psychology, namely academic psychology, have been, and are being, called upon to make contributions in these areas. As a consequence, what we are witnessing is really a renaissance of the cooperative working relationship between psychology and pedagogy that was characteristic of the turn of the century, which for one reason or another was left to wither when both disciplines went their own separate ways. The only difference, then, is that Educational Psychology Reincarnate has been christened with a new name, inasmuch as the old one has come to represent only a limited aspect of the original.